President was also an insult to the intelligence of the local citizens, because in effect it was presumed that the latter were unable to carry on municipal administration. The Government had felt the need for a non-official President so long ago as 1921 and agreed to give one on the understanding that the council would employ an executive officer lent by the Government under the President and removable from office only by Government. On another occasion, the Council was told that the right of electing a non-official President would be granted on condition that the Council agreed to appoint as its chief Executive Officer an officer of the status of a Dewan Peishkar with control over the Municipal executive and powers similar to those of the Commissioner of the Madras Corporation. The Council accepted the latter proposal but the Government left the matter as it was. The member requested that the matter should be taken up for consideration again as a change was imperatively necessary.

His next request was for the removal of the disqualification placed on women to become members of Municipal Council, by Section 11 of the Regulation. This was a blot on the statute book when women were granted equal rights and privileges with men everywhere else.

Lastly he referred to the reply given by the Dewan to the representative of the Trivandrum Municipal Council at the last session of the Assembly, about the remedying of the defects of the Municipal Regulation and requested that early action might be taken in the matter.

DEWAN'S REPLY: Mr. Nataraja Pillai, you have suggested an amended Regulation. As I told the member who made the representation before you, the amendment has been taken in hand, and if, by such amendment, the Trivandrum Municipality will get a non-official President, Government will not stand in its way.

As regards the various suggestions you made, your representation will be sent to the Law Member and he will consider them in drafting the amendments.

60. Desirability of having an elected non-official President for the Attingal Municipal Council.

Mr. S. RAMAKRISHNA AIYAR, (*Municipal Council, Attingal*) spoke about the need for having an elected non-official President for the Attingal Municipal Council under the Municipal Regulation. The Council was entitled to have such a President and in fact the first three Presidents after the promulgation of the Regulation were elected non-officials. But when the third President resigned his post, the Government appointed an official member of the Council, the Head Master of the local English High School as its President, in express violation of the provisions of the Regulation. No doubt, under the Regulation, the Government had power to nominate members to represent minorities. A few places were also created to be filled *ex-officio*. The Attingal Council had an elected majority; but by the nomination of an Official President the Government had deprived the Council of its legitimate right. Viewed as a contract, the Attingal

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citizens agreed to tax themselves under the Municipal Regulation on the understanding that the Government would give them a Council with an elected majority. The Government's part of the contract was not fulfilled, in express contravention of the provisions of the Regulation and that amounted to a breach of contract. Official Presidents appointed by the Government were generally outsiders who had no interest in local affairs. While some were inclined to run matters smoothly, others set at nought the opinion of the Council. Instances were not wanting when the President had acted against the wishes of the Council and committed official vagaries, with the result that the Municipality suffered loss and damage. The member wished that the Government would consider the question again and grant the Council an elected non-official President.

DEWAN'S REPLY :—Mr. Ramakrishna Aiyar, to many of those references as to the position of law in relation to Government which you gave expression to, I believe as Dewan I cannot say anything. As I said, the Municipal Regulation is going to be amended shortly. But, as the law stands now, Government have got a right and a duty to see that the municipalities are properly conducted, and when they find that for its proper conduct a Municipality requires an official President they have to put in one. Government found that your Council was not working properly and Government found that, instead of an elected President, an official President had to be nominated. When the Regulation is amended, or, if the Regulation is not amended, Government find that the condition of your Municipality allows of an elected President being entrusted with the Municipality, Government will be quite ready to allow you to elect your President.

MEMBER : May I say a word in addition to what I said about the question of law ?

DEWAN : I wanted to say that you raised a question of law as to the powers of the Government in the matter. That matter will be referred to the Law Officers of Government.

The Assembly adjourned at 5 P. M. to meet again at 11-50 A. M. the next day.

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